

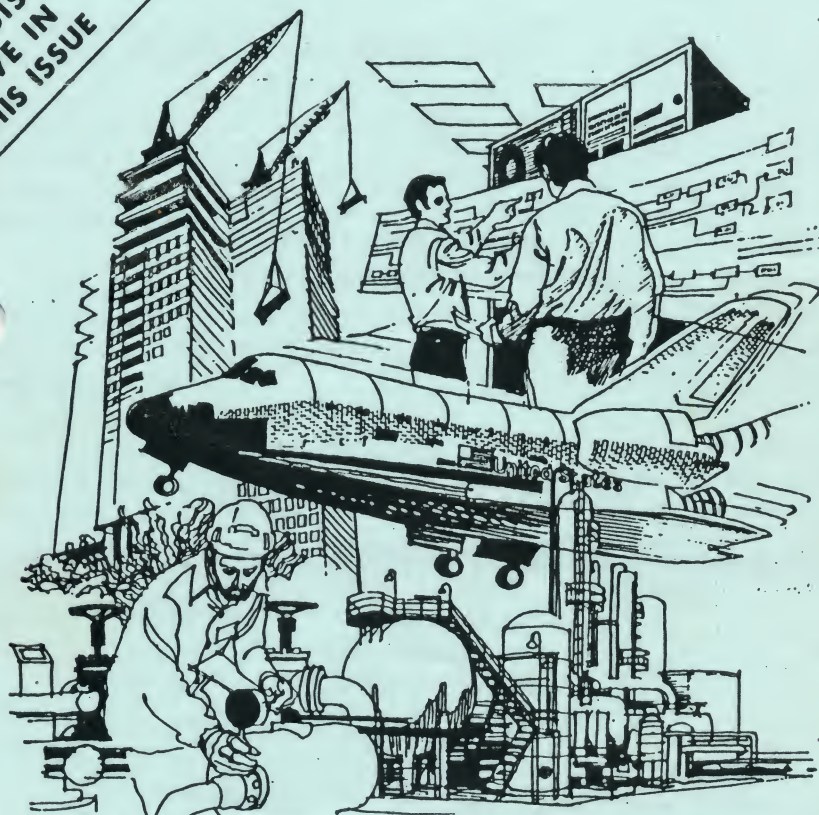
STATUS

N E W S L E T T E R

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 4

APRIL • 1985

FREE DISK
DRIVE IN
THIS ISSUE



This Picture Has Nothing to do
With This Issue

Dos 2.0

S.T.A.T.U.S. - OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	GENE RODRIGUEZ	499-6021
VICE PRESIDENT	STAN HARRISON	497-4369
TREASURER	J. C. PETTY	463-6904
SECRETARY	HENRY COLONNA	484-2111
LIBRARIAN	DAVID HOWELL	468-3433
SYSOP	DOUG BOYNTON	468-6242
EDITOR	GENE RODRIGUEZ III	490-2951

=====

S.T.A.T.U.S. BBS
804-468-1096

=====

ADVERTISING RATES

The STATUS newsletter is now accepting advertising... the rates are as follows:

FULL PAGE
\$25.00
(5 1/2" x 8 1/2")

BUSINESS CARD
\$10.00
(3" x 5")

Copy must be camera ready and received no later than the first Thursday of the month, ads received later cannot be guaranteed to appear in that month's newsletter. Advertisements can be mailed to the STATUS Newsletter Exchange accompanied by a check made payable to STATUS for the correct amount.

Editor's File

Being the Public Service oriented type of publication that the STATUS Newsletter is, we jumped at the chance to present our readers with the first ever do-it-yourself disk drive kit! That's right, we've skipped right past Utilities and jumped into hardware...Thanks to Randy Holmes for the technical assist and for the Pseudos coding.

This month's Newsletter contains articles from not only our regular contributors, but from a whole new batch of authors and pundits...my thank you list is getting longer (finally!) and for that I am grateful...of particular interest are H. Colonna's DOS Review (NOW we get to the meat and potatoes!) D. Pemberton's DISK-WASHER (soon to be serialized in the NATIONAL ENQUIRER) and D. Boynton's overview of the modems available for the ATARI computer. Spring reading the STATUS way...

Well, the latest word is that the XEs are being loaded on the trucks...that means we'll see them in Tidewater just after (but not before) the advent of indoor plumbing. We'll keep you posted, and maybe we'll be able to give you a look when they hit the shelves...

In other news, the club has decided to participate in the Virginia & Carolinas Business Computer Show... hopefully our participation will help to more fully spread the ATARI word. This event could really get our name around in the local computer community...check that...it will get our name around, but in what context is up to YOU! This is going to be a chance for us to show our commitment and savvy regarding the ATARI, so do your part...

Meanwhile, keep an eye out for the CModem-1

ER111

DOS 2.0

An Evaluation

By Henry Colonna

Now that I have explained the reasons why you need DOS for your Atari and disk drive setup, it's time to move on and discuss the various DOSes. There are at least 10 or more, in addition, the older ones are constantly being revised and updated...so I'll try to cover the major ones first, then pick up the other ones near the end.

The first on the list is the Atari 2.0 DOS. It's first because it WAS first. It's also a DOS that you have to have. Somewhere down the line, you will get a very picky machine language program (like the R.BIN handler for the 1030 modem) that absolutely will not run with anything but Atari 2.0. So you simply must be familiar with it. It's other advantage is that every single piece of software that needs a DOS will run with Atari 2.0, since it's the standard. With the other DOSes, there will be programs that won't work. There are programs that don't work with DOS XL but do with RANA DOS, and vice versa...but they will all work with the Atari 2.0 DOS.

The other advantage for Atari 2.0 is that, for programmers, the entire source code is available with some wonderful explanations from Bill Wilkinson (the fellow that wrote the DOS) from COMPUTE! Check for this book, called Inside Atari DOS, at Walden's or Games 'N Gadgets.

Those are certainly the major reasons for using Atari 2.0. Unfortunately the DOS shows its age, although we are all fond of it. For instance, the DOS is a 2 part DOS.

There is the DOS.SYS file that boots (remember when I discussed boot?) up when you turn your computer and drive on. This file will allow you to do basic disk operations (LOAD, RUN, SAVE, ENTER, XIO, etc.) but does not have all the code necessary to do file maintenance (unless you were knowledgeable enough to force it through tedious programming.)

In any case...to rename, delete, copy, write DOS, initialize a disk, and all those other file maintenance functions, DOS.SYS has to load in the DUP.SYS file. This happens when you type the word "DOS" from Basic. The DUP.SYS file loads in and presents you with the list of options available for you to do.

But before I get ahead of myself, this is where Atari DOS gets to be a pain. You see, when you type "DOS" to load DUP.SYS into memory, if you have a program in your memory it is lost.

It's irritating.

There is a slow and cumbersome way around this however. It's referred to as J.SAV. Once you create this file on your disk, you will not have to do it again, and you won't lose your program in your memory. The problem is that MEM.SAV is an area on the disk that images the area that you're loading DUP into. So, when you type "DOS", the 66 sector MEM.SAV has to erase itself to clear anything from a previous operation, image the data to the disk, then read in the DUP.SYS file. This way, your memory is protected and you won't lose your program.

Unfortunately, after getting used to DOS XL (more next month) I simply cannot handle this really slow process. It's just too boring, frustrating, and slow.

That's by far the reason why Atari 2.0 seems very outdated these days. Most of the other DOSes handle this problem much more wisely.

There are a few other minor annoyances with Atari 2.0 DOS. The first one is that the letters on the menu simply don't match up to their functions. "A" for a directory?... "O" to move a file? Almost every operation simply doesn't match up with it's letter and it's hard to remember.

The other frustration is that the DOS is set up to write with verify. To change this to write without verify (which is perfectly fine unless you have a flaky drive) simply:

POKE 1913,80

and then write your DOS files again (if you want DOS to default to write without verify.) If you've never tried this, do it immediately! It works 4 times faster!

That's what Atari 2.0 is all about. It's a DOS you must have because certain programs require it, but it's rather clumsy and its age shows. But we all love and respect it.

There is a more advanced DUP.SYS package for Atari 2.0 (it becomes Atari 2.6f) that has been up on the BBS a few times. It's neat, it has nicer colors and has sector counters, and a hex/decimal conversion option, but it's much longer and therefore slower to use. There have been other changes to Atari 2.0, you might stumble across 2.1 or 2.2 or even one called David Young Dup. For all practical purposes they are all roughly the same.

Next month: DOS XL Comes to the Rescue

P.S. Please feel free to debate my opinions on the local bulletin boards!

STATUS Minutes

March 1985

President Gene Rodriguez opened the meeting by recognizing and welcoming new attendees. He followed up with the latest news from Atari Corp. and other hardware and software suppliers. Atari DOS 2.5 is reported to be out soon.

Gene presented the latest information on Henry Colonna's efforts to obtain a booth for the upcoming computer show at The Pavilion. Discussion became lengthy over the operating restrictions, so it was moved/seconded/passed to continue efforts to obtain a more liberal contract and vote on the project at the March 21st meeting.

Doug Boynton (STATUS BBS Sysop) reported version 3.0 would be up and running soon and any feedback would be greatly appreciated. He also reported the availability of a Atari 810 disk drive for the BBS. It was moved/seconded/passed to have STATUS purchase the drive for the BBS. Doug reported Drive 3 would be up by the end of the week.

Buck Maddrey (Activities Director) introduced Dwane Cochenour of "CO-BRA Computer Center". Dwane announced the opening of his new store located in the Pembroke area next to Bradlee's. He is very interested in our business and offered club members a 15 percent discount.

Buck also opened a discussion on a "used" software garage sale. Further action was tabled pending some clarification of the legalities.

David Howell (Librarian) announced the availability of the school bulletin board for members who wanted to post items for sale. The bulletin board is located in the computer training room.

Skip Poole presented a demonstration of the US Doubler installed in an Atari 1050 disk drive. The US Doubler gives the Atari 1050 true double density. Skip reports the installation of the US Doubler to be somewhat complicated. He also demonstrated Sparta DOS and its excellent capabilities.

Update March 21, 1985

News from the Computer Show allows more liberal operating conditions. A motion to have STATUS participate in the show was seconded and passed. Buck Maddrey was appointed as coordinator for the STATUS presentation.

Gene Rodriguez reported that the Chairman of the Tidewater Chapter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association had contacted him regarding some assistance in telecommunications during the Labor Day Telethon, and Doug Boynton volunteered to gather more information on this matter.

A short demonstration was given of the new program PRINT SHOP.

Dick Litchfield
Secretary, STATUS

007...The BBS

8 #

By Don Pemberton

(Don & Rich Pemberton, Sysops)

(EDITOR'S NOTE: It seems that the lowering of prices on ATARI equipment and the rising level of interest in said equipment have combined to bring about the creation of a whole new flock of Bulletin Board Systems. This is an introduction to one of them...)

I must first start out by thanking all of the people who have helped me in this new and strange undertaking. I never thought I would get it off the ground, let alone survive to become one of Portsmouth's first Atari Bulletin Boards on a 24 hour basis...007 B.B.S.

The System was not named "007" in honor of that spy famed on screen and in print, it was called that because of the phone number...397-1007 (pretty slick,huh). I started 007 to give Tidewater a Board that would give you a chance to see the art work that I do. I graduated from Tidewater Community College with a Media Advertising Degree, but I like the fine arts better...I tried doing paintings and selling them at art shows, but really felt I wasn't where I wanted to be..So..I added a disk drive, a modem (and a healthy desire to venture into the land of unknown origin!) to my existing system and created 007.

Today the Board has some 70 members...in a little over three weeks!!! 007 presently has four message bases, and in the future we hope to add an on-line adventure game that we hope will last a full year! Also, 007 will be adding the ROM magazine to its files.

As soon as the disk drive arrives that I had to repair, the downloads will increase immensely. Along with a few new features and product reviews by local authors we hope to make 007 B.B.S. an exciting addition to the ATARI users of Tidewater.

CMODEM and TINTERM 1.0

by Cam-Bell Computer Devices

Reviewed by Randy Holmes

Computers and modems make a wonderful team. With these two pieces of hardware, you can access information, receive free software, and communicate with people, all without leaving the chair in front of your keyboard.

Many people don't have modems because the price was prohibitive, or because they were intimidated at hooking up a new piece of hardware to their computer.

Cam-Bell Communications has just introduced a hardware package that is so inexpensive and easy to use, there is no excuse for not joining the world of telecommunications with your computer.

Cam-Bell's new CModem-1 is very interesting in that it is a kit you assemble. The kit comes with all the components you need (Figure 1), and a clear concise manual for the assembly and use of Cmodem-1.



Figure 1

The actual assembly of the kit is very easy, and explained step-by-step in the manual. Tricky areas of assembly are made simple by the well written instructions and excellent illustrations.

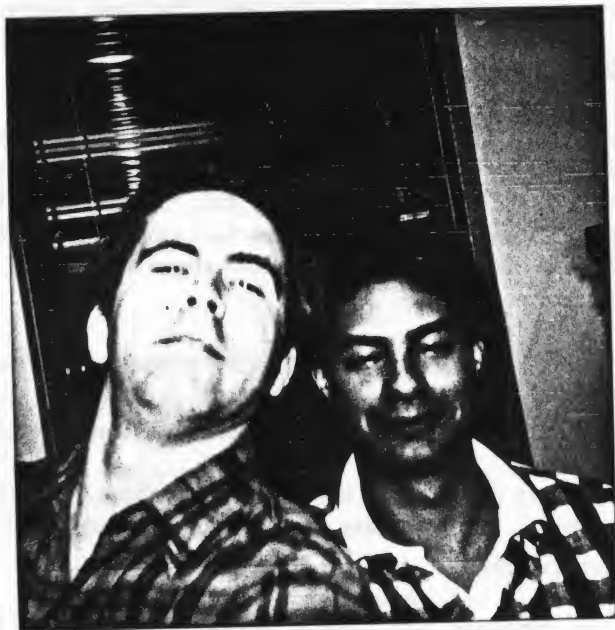
The actual operation of the CModem-1, is a little different from that of conventional, direct-connect modems, but the kit includes all the equipment other companies might consider "optional" to make the use of the CModem-1 as trouble-free as possible. An ample amount of duct tape is provide to assure a slip-free connection to both phone and TV speaker.

Once the send and receive ends of the modem are in place, communication may begin. The software program, TinTerm 1.0, is include with the package, and supports a new communications protocol; ConModem. A condensed form of the popular XModem, ConModem is not yet widely accepted; however Cam-Bell feels that as more users acquire the CModem-1 and TinTerm, the protocol will become an industry-wide standard.

TinTerm takes care of sending and receiving data over the CModem, and has Ascii/Atascii translation, ultra-variable baud rate, and multiple buffers. The program is menu-driven and easy to use.

Some problems exist, however. The send and receive modules must be kept far enough apart so that the data transmission line is always pulled tight, which may be a problem for those in a limited space. Also, data becomes garbled if a loud disturbance such as a cough, a dog's bark, or someone speaking, occurs while sending or receiving data. Another major problem is the rusting of the send and receive modules. This can be prevented, however, by covering the S-R modules with a plastic bag(also supplied with the kit) after use.

The CModem-1 and TinTerm 1.0 represent an amazing value in the field of computer telecommunications. The hardware and software to join this brave new electronic world is simple, easy to assemble, and even easier to use.



President of Cam-Bell, Hooter Purvis(L),
and Marketing Director ElMonte Slim(R)

RamTalker

By Randy Holmes

Over the past three months, I've tried to give everyone a quick primer on digital sound, speech, and how these subjects apply to the computing community. The RamTalker program is a good jumping-off place to begin experimenting with speech analysis and recognition.

Speech recognition is a complex procedure. The listener, computer or human, must determine if an actual word is being said, then must determine what (if it is) that word is. Then an association must be made with the object or concept that word represents.

Easy for humans. VERY difficult for computers. A computer thinks in numbers, so the sounds for a word must be changed into numbers so that the computer can deal with them. We did that with RamTalker. Now, the computer must have something to associate that sound pattern with. If we have continuous speech, we must split it into separate words, and pull out the most significant words, or just the that the computer recognizes.

Through the use of "trained" speech patterns (last month) the computer may associate a spoken word with a command. "RUN" or "DIRECTORY" could be used to command the computer to perform that function, as well as many others.

The programs to do this must use complex algorithms that are very arithmetic-intensive. That is, they take a lot of processor time.

In the next months, I hope to get a simple speech-recognition working, and would appreciate any ideas that you may have. So, with RamTalker and its future relatives under development, let me tell you the facts of life...

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Randy tells us that his next program will be titled...oddly enough...LIFE. Look for it in future issues of the STATUS Newsletter...)

**SOFTWARE
COMPUTER SUPPLIES
INSTRUCTION**

**338 Constitution Dr
Va Beach, VA 23462**

**CO-BRA
COMPUTER
CENTER**

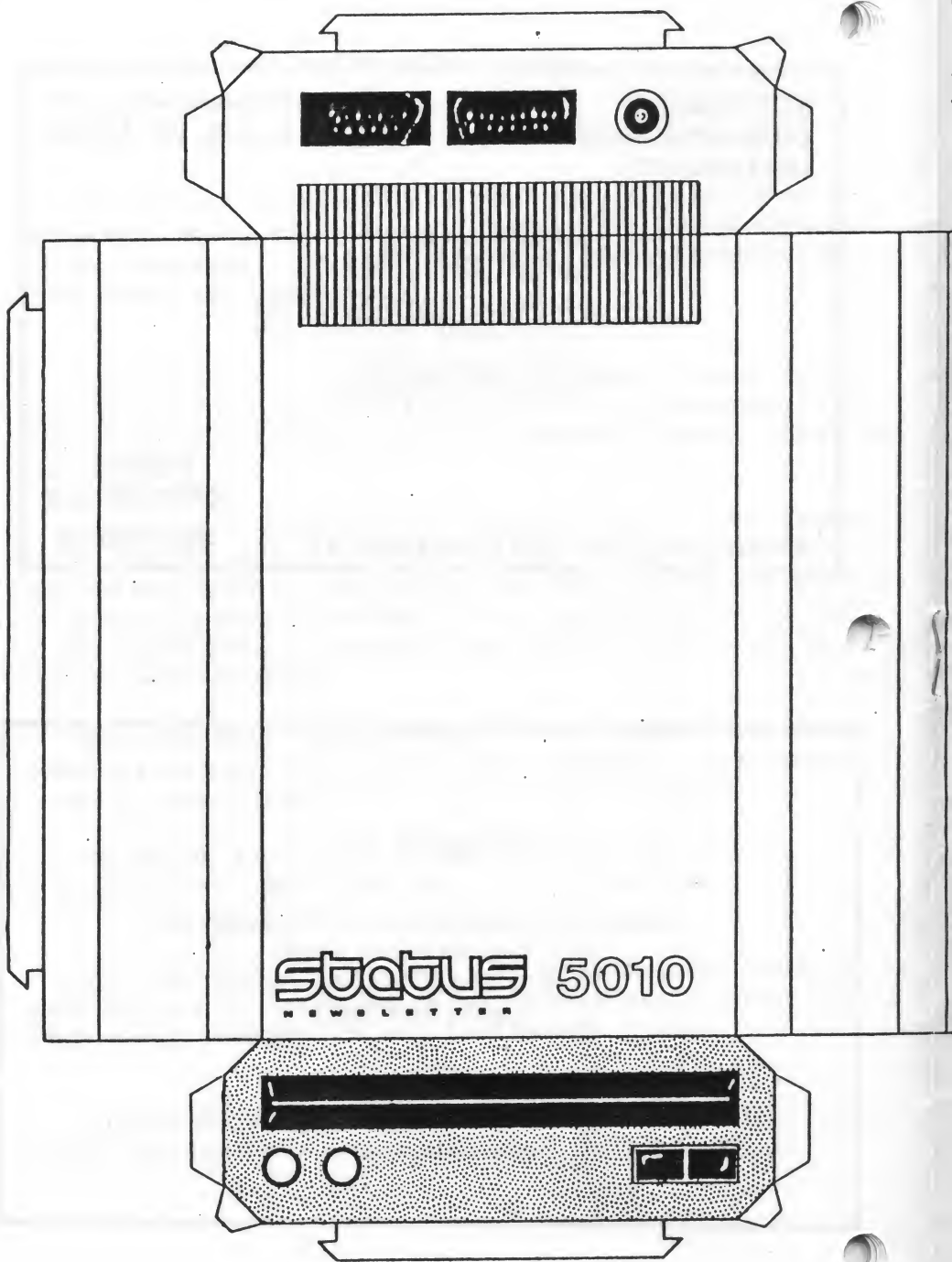
**DWANE
COCHENOUR**

15% Discount for STATUS members !

499-6336

PRINTED BY

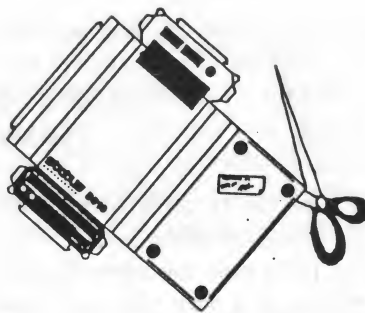
**Professional Blueprinters Of Tidewater, Inc.
3324 Virginia Beach Boulevard
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23452
(804) 498-7069**



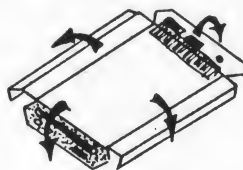
status 5010
NEWLETTER

STATUS 5010

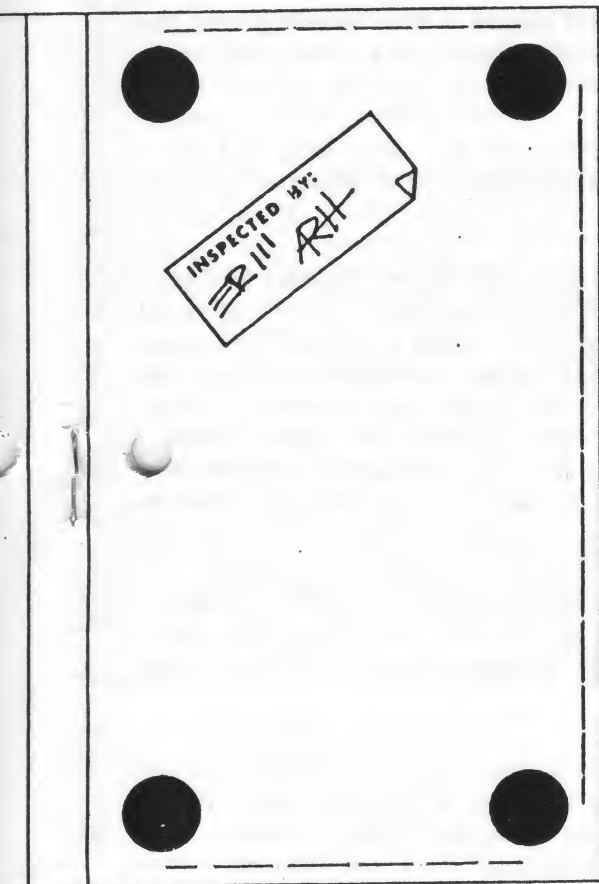
DISK DRIVE KIT



STEP ONE



STEP TWO



FINISHED PRODUCT

NOTE: CUT "----" LINES

Telecomputing

By Doug Boynton

This time, we're going to spend some time discussing modems. The word modem stands for MODulator-DEModulator. In a nutshell, a modem takes computer data, translates it to ones and zeros (binary), then uses that information to make subtle changes in a tone that is transmitted over telephone lines. On the receiving end, the process is reversed. The changes in the frequency of the tone are de-coded back into binary, and back into data that's in a useful form (program, text file, etc.)

Currently, there are many modems on the market now. We'll break them down into two groups...those that need the (getting tough to find) 850 interface unit, and those that don't.

The 850 interface was marketed with the earlier 400/800 computers as a way to give the Atari a way to communicate with non-Atari equipment. Until recently, it was needed if you intended to use your Atari with a modem or printer. Prices for the 850 vary...depending on whether you find one new (\$100-\$189) or used (usually under \$100). The 850 will work with almost any generic computer gear...once you get the cables right. Most any modem will work using the 850. These include Hayes Smartmodem, considered by some to be the Cadillac of modems...considered by others to be very overpriced (\$200+). At any rate, the commands used by the Hayes to perform its many functions are becoming a "standard" of sorts...and many other modems are emulating the Hayes' command structure. Another modem you might consider if going the 850 route is the Signalmate by Anchor Automation. These modems range from \$100-\$200 in price with varying baud rates and features. The Signalmate mk VII has developed a following, and good software is available to use with it.

An alternative to the 850 interface is a device called an R-VERTER that will connect with most generic modems. It's in the 40-50 dollar price range. It will not interconnect with parallel printers like the Epson, Okidata, or Gemini...you need a separate, 40-50 dollar interface to do that. There have been some problems reported by folks using R-VERTERS to do things like operate Bulletin Board Systems, as well.

Please remember that you need both the modem AND the interface with the modems we've discussed so far. This pushes the price out of the reasonable range for many, so let's take a look at modems that don't use the an interface.

The best-selling (recently) in this group include the Atari 1030...a real bargain at under 70 dollars most places...and getting tougher to find. The 1030 comes with a built-in terminal program that is next to useless. Luckily, there are some very good public domain terminal programs...and some inexpensive commercial programs available to use with the 1030 that will make it as useful to you as any modem on the market. These include the "RMODEM" series in the public domain, and the "AMODEM" series that use a handler that can be obtained for under 20 dollars.

The 1030 will soon be replaced by Atari's new XM-301. Details about this modem aren't fully available yet, but it's expected to be inexpensive...and, in all likelihood, will be a 1030 in a different package...possibly without the useless built-in terminal program.

Another popular modem is the MPP-1000x series...these include the MPP-1000C and MPP-1000E. These modems plug into the joystick port of your Atari, bypassing an interface. The MPP-1000E is the newest of the two. Both modems offer auto-answer functions...and both come with terminal software that allow all of the features you'd expect from a smart-terminal program...up-and-downloading of files using XMODEM protocol, several buffers to keep captured data separate, and so forth. These modems are currently selling in the 100-140 dollar price range...look for discounts on the remaining 1000-C's. Some compatibility problems reported earlier with the 1000E seem to have been ironed out with the development of a new terminal package. 1000C owners can also upgrade their terminal program for a nominal charge.

In a nutshell, then, these are the most popular modem packages for the Atari right now. There are other modems available...MANY other modems available, but these are the ones most people are buying and using. Telecomputing doesn't have to be expensive...at least not until you discover all those out-of-town BBS's!

NEXT TIME: TERMINAL PROGRAMS



PseuDos 1.0

LISTING

(EDITOR'S NOTE: this program should be used only in conjunction with the STATUS 5010 disk drive: this program is only compatible with the 5010 and any programs or disks from other systems must be converted...much like ATARI DOS 3.0...using the PseuConvert program available from STATUS for only \$159.95)

```
10 REM PseuDos 1.0 4/85
20 REM A.R.Holmes & E.Rodriguez III
30 REM To be used in conjunction
40 REM with the STATUS 5010 Disk
50 REM drive, supplied in the STATUS
60 REM newsletter April,1985.
65 DIM F$(20),MSG$(1),DEC$(1)
: FMT=500:DEL=600:SPD=700:DIR=900
70 CLOSE #1:SETCOLOR 2,0,10
: SETCOLOR 1,0,0:SETCOLOR 4,0,12:?
"J":? :? :? :? "PseuDos 1.0
-----"
80 ? "Command Menu----- ":?
"-----":POKE
764,255:POKE 752,1:F6=0
90 ? :? :? "(L)oad a file":?
"(S)ave a file":? "(R)un a file":?
"(E)dit a file":? "(D)eleate a file"
100 ? "(F)ormat":? "(C)heck drive
speed":? "(A) Disk Directory":? :?
:? "Choice?":OPEN #1,4,0,"K:"
110 GET #1,A:IF A=70 THEN GOTO FMT
112 IF A=68 THEN GOTO DEL
114 IF A=67 THEN GOTO SPD
116 IF A=65 THEN GOTO DIR
120 ? "File name":INPUT F$
122 GOSUB 125
124 GOTO 240
125 S=RND(0)*18:IF S<5 THEN 125
130 FOR B=1 TO S:F6=F6+1
135 IF F6=3 THEN FOR I=1 TO 40:NEXT
I
140 FOR BP=1 TO 12
150 SOUND 0,35,10,8
160 NEXT BP
170 FOR SL=1 TO 2
180 SOUND 0,8,95,4
190 NEXT SL
200 FOR W=1 TO 2
210 SOUND 0,5,8,2
220 NEXT W
230 NEXT B
235 SOUND 0,0,0,0:RETURN
240 ? "J":? :? :? :? :? :? :? :? :?
:? " ***ERROR***"
250 RESTORE 1000+INT(RND(0)*8)
260 READ MSG$:DEC$=CHR$(ASC(MSG$)-2)
265 IF DEC$="Q" THEN 280
270 ? DEC$;:GOTO 260
280 POKE 764,255:? "Press any key
to continue"
290 IF PEEK(764)=255 THEN 290
300 GOTO 70
500 ? "J":? :? :? :? :? :? :?
"Formatting..."
510 GOSUB 125
520 RESTORE 1005
530 READ MSG$:DEC$=CHR$(ASC(MSG$)-2)
535 IF DEC$="Q" THEN 550
540 PRINT DEC$;:GOTO 530
550 POKE 764,255:? "
Press any key to
continue"
560 IF PEEK(764)=255 THEN 560
570 GOTO 70
600 ? "J":? :? :? :? :? :? :? "Delete
which file":INPUT F$
610 GOSUB 125
```

```

620 RESTORE 1006
630 READ MSG$:DEC$=CHR$(ASC(MSG$)-2)
635 IF DEC$="Q" THEN 650
640 PRINT DEC$;:GOTO 630
650 POKE 764,255:? "
      Press any key to
continue"
660 IF PEEK(764)=255 THEN 660
670 GOTO 70
700 ? "":? :? :? :? :? :?
"Checking drive speed...."
710 ? "Please wait for speed to
stabilize..."
720 POSITION 15,10:? "RPM--->"
730 POSITION 23,10:PRINT RPM
740 FOR CNT=1 TO 8
750 S=5:GOSUB 130
760 POSITION 23,10:PRINT RPM
770 RPM=RPM+INT(RND(0)*100)
780 NEXT CNT
790 POSITION 23,10:PRINT "000"
800 POKE 764,255:? :? :? "Press any
key to continue"
810 IF PEEK(764)=255 THEN 810
820 GOTO 70
900 ? "":? :? :? :? :? "Disk
Directory":? "=====
910 GOSUB 125
920 RESTORE 1010
930 READ MSG$:DEC$=CHR$(ASC(MSG$)-2)
940 IF DEC$="Q" THEN 970
950 ? DEC$;:GOTO 930
970 ? "Press any key to continue"
980 IF PEEK(764)=255 THEN 980
990 GOTO 70
1000 DATA 8,4,5,/,/,/,/,F,6,X,

```

```

K,E,6,"0,C,F,6,"0,H,"R,C,R,6,T,
:,:,:,,:,:,,:,:,S
1001 DATA 6,5,2,/,/,/,/,R,0,Y,
6,T,"U,W,R,R,N,C,"P,Q,P,/,6,Z,K,
U,V,6,P,V,"",",",",",",S
1002 DATA 9,6,4,/,/,/,/,H,K,N,
5,"P,Q,V,"H,Q,W,P,F,!,!,!,
!,!,!,!,",/,C,P,C,Y,J,
6,T,6,*,*,",",",",S
1003 DATA 8,3,4,/,/,/,/,F,T,K,
X,6,"F,Q,Q,T,"U,6,C,N,6,F,"U,J,
W,V,"",",",",",",",S
1004 DATA 6,6,6,/,/,/,/,F,K,U,
M,"0,6,F,K,M,0,"P,Q,V,"E,Q,0,R,
C,V,K,D,N,6,"",",",",S
1005 DATA F,6,X,K,E,6,"E,C,P,P,
Q,V,"H,Q,T,D,C,V,"C,K,T,S
1006 DATA H,K,N,6,"C,N,T,6,C,
F,C,"F,6,N,6,V,6,F,S
1010 DATA R,U,6,W,F,Q,U,"",2,
2,2,"",",",R,U,6,W,F,W,R,"",2,2,
2,"",",",",",",",",
1020 DATA P,Q,W,V,K,N,"",2,
2,2,"",",",F,W,D,V,6,T,0,"",2,2,
2,"",",",",",",",",
1030 DATA H,Q,P,V,M,N,T,"",2,2,
2,"",",",W,P,H,K,Z,6,T,"",2,2,2,
",",",",",",",",
1040 DATA F,W,N,D,6,P,W,"",2,
2,2,"",",",Z,Z,D,Q,F,6,0,"",2,2,
2,"",",",",",",",",
1050 DATA R,N,C,M,D,C,P,"",2,
2,2,"",",",C,R,T,K,N,H,Q,0,N,*,*,
*,",",",",",",",",
1060 DATA C,D,W,M,D,D,U,"",2,
2,2,"",",",D,R,N,C,I,W,6,"",2,2,
2,"",",",",",",",",S

```

Disk-Washer

A True Story

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This little tidbit was passed on to me under the condition that it's author remain nameless...By the way, Don Pemberton says to use a lint free---OOPS! Sorry Don...)

Once upon a time, there was an ATARI BBS Sysop named Don. Don had just purchased a brand new INDUS GT for the BBS (as most Sysops know, BBSs have very healthy appetites). He very quickly hooked his new drive up to the system because a few days before he had already redone all the system disks, so as to be able to run the added drive (most Sysops also are familiar with the level of complication young BBSs...BBS's...BBI?...can attain). Lo and behold, his new drive was very quiet....,but his old one was much,much louder. AHhh!an idea! What would he do? What would you do? Time's up. He went to the cupboard and he got out some grease...That's right he tread where only immortals (and various Sysops) dare to tread...he greased the old drive. As he turned it on, it was very quiet (almost too quiet)...but being optimistic by nature, he put the B.B.S. back up.

Everything was fine when all of the sudden the drive let out with a loud noise...a noise that sounded uncannily like a disk drive screaming at the to it's lungs:"THE WRONG GREASE"!!! Struck with a fear only the thought of a trip to the repair shop can bring, he made for the telephone to call for help. He reached a man at an ATARI STORE in a faraway land who told him he should use silicon grease on the aging vinyl spinner.

After calling around for a while, he located some of the grease at a store known throughout the land for it's vast store of computer supplies...SINGER'S. He got some, tried it, and it helped at first...but soon the dreaded ERROR SECTORS began to appear!!! After searching for what seemed to be days, he found the problem. The first grease had melted and splattered all over the work disk and the main system disk, and if that wasn't horror enough, he had put several other disks in while checking the drive...they too were dotted with grease! He took the drive and sent it off to be repaired (somehow you knew it would come to this...) Now, what was he going to do about the six messed-up disk?

After much hemming and hawing (a sport Sysops are much given to) he had an idea...but first he would check with the great computer Wizard Colonnus. Now you must understand, gentle reader, that while it is very easy to get in touch with the Wizard Colonnus, it is very difficult to get anything across to him, however, after much effort and chanting (personally, I think it was the burning of the

republican entrails that did it) Don the Sysop was able to get his idea across. The Wizard rumbled to himself, rubbed his meager whiskers, and spoke: "Go ahead 'try it Don, but personally I don't think it'll work...maybe if you try humming 'Tiny Bubbles'...Oh, by the way, if it does work I get the CompuServe rights to the story!" And with that he disappeared in what passed for a cloud of smoke.

Pondering the Wizard's words, he took one of the disks (which was the 800XL Translation disk) and he put it in a clean sink filled with lukewarm water and a mild solution of dish water soap. He moved the disk back and forth through the soapy water and very carefully rubbed the disk at the opening and rotated it as he went along...Yes he was humming 'Tiny Bubbles' as he did so. Then he filled the sink with clear clean lukewarm water and rinsed the disk off very good. Then he hung the disk on a line in his dark room (as you may remember, these things are delicate and not to be exposed to direct sunlight.) Two days later, he checked to see if it was dry. It WAS!!! So he put it in his new drive to see if it was still ok. AND.....IT WORKED FINE!!!!

Now, fair disk owner, don't go out and wash all the old disks you have just because they have a few finger prints on them, however, if you have a disk that has something on it (ie. food, drink, or anything that might be the cause of the disk not performing properly) well....WASH IT!!! It's not approved by the Wizard Colonnus (then again not much else besides HomeTerm is) but it's better than throwing it away!!!!.....

Mail Order

A Brief Dissertation on Buying Mail
Order Hardware and Software.
By Skip Poole

My story is brief and painful... with credit card in hand and racing heart, I dialed the convenient 1-800 number, was answered by a Sweet Young Thing that was more than happy to take my order. Five minutes later I was off the phone and watching the mailbox.

Well...I watched and watched and watched for 27 days.

Finally! A box from the mail order house! With trembling fingers I quickly tore the wrapping off, struggled with 10 miles of packing tape and got the goodies.

Racing to my trusty 800, I fired everything up and inserted my brand-new Koala Pad Illustrator Disk into the drive and waited...and waited...and waited. Oh No!!! I can't believe this...Why me? How can a big time mail order outfit send me a blank disk?

Back to the phone...Did you ever read the little footnotes on those mail order ads? I'm talking about the one that says "1-800 number for orders only". Well, I figured, my order is screwed up, so I'm sort of re-ordering.

Wanna bet?

Sweet Young Thing: "You'll have to call our Technician."

Mr. Poole: "Hey, I don't need a Technician, I just paid you \$75.00 for a blank disk. I don't usually fork out that much for a disk ya'know."

SYT: "I'm sorry sir, our Technician handles these problems."

Again I'm dialing. Guess who answers? ...you got it, Sweet Young Thing. Guess who's not in today? Right again, the Technician. (Kill, Kill, Kill)

---Next day---

Mr. Poole: "Hi there Technician, I've got this problem see, and I need some help."

Mr. Technician: "No problem, just send it back and we'll replace it." (Whaddaya know, results!) "Hang on", he says, "I'll connect you with the receptionist and she'll give you a return authorization number."

Mr. P: "But wait!!!"

§CLICK§

Sweet Young Thing: "May I help you sir...?"

---Three Weeks Later---

What's that in the mailbox? SS00FFTTWWAARREE!!!!!!

Running upstairs (pant, pant, pant), turn on everything, (pant, pant, pant)

Boot disk and wait...and wait...and wait. YOUR KIDDING!!! NOT AGAIN!!!

Dial, dial, dial...Whasamatta with you people!!! You tryin' to drive me crazy???

What!?! You bet I'm mad!!! No, I'm not calling back on the other line! You take this down and make sure TECHNICIAN gets the word!!"

I'VE GOT ANOTHER BLANK, BLANKETY-BLANK DISK!!!!!!!!!!

---Two weeks later---

I finally got my disk, but after four months and a week, I sort of lost interest

Anyhow, as you can see, the mail order system isn't always the cheapest, or the easiest way to buy stuff. Which finally leads to what I wanted to say...

We've got a lot of software/hardware outlets in this area that are trying to do two things:

- 1) Make a living, and
- 2) Meet our rather fickle needs.

The next time you start complaining about the cost of, or the lack of software/hardware on the local market, think about what you're saying. Ask yourself who's putting the local software market in between the rock and the hard place... then go look at all your mail order software and wonder why the local merchants are losing interest in supporting us.

Computer Word Search

By Stan Harrison III

A B G T R Y H U I J H G F D D S S D
G T G H J U T A N A R G Y T D S G H
F A A F G T Y J K V T G F D V R H O
B V C R G H Y R D F G O I P L E H K
A S C H I F G D S E M A G K I S D L
D F G T S H U Y E G D I R T R A C V
G T R S H L O R T N O C S S F T I O
G H S A I N H S S A V N O I T P O J
G Y T A F U I N B D R A O B Y E K G
G F A F T G H F D S S T C E L E S H
Y U R G Y I O P D S X C V B G T Y L
D F T G H F Y U I R E W S D F G L P
P O I R T G F C X Z A S D E R F V M
V B N M K O P U Y R V B G D X Z A J
T R E S N I R A E L C M E D O M M O
F G H Y U I B N M C X D F U I O E S
M M O I Y R C M O C A H P L A H G F
B H G F D D C V G R E T N I R P P G
F G U Y R E T I R W I R A T A A D S
G Y T U N H N R U T E R N B C N M O
B G F D S C V G O P T R E S F G H J

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| 1 RANA | 2 PRINTER |
| 3 ATARI WRITER | 4 ATARI |
| 5 DISK | 6 MODEM |
| 7 CARTRIDGE | 8 ALPHACOM |
| 9 TV | 10 RETURN |
| 11 CLEAR | 12 INSERT |
| 13 SHIFT | 14 CONTROL |
| 15 OPTION | 16 SELECT |
| 17 START | 18 HELP |
| 19 KEYBOARD | 20 GAMES |

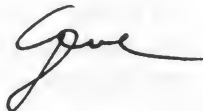
* President's Column *

April is here and our newsletter will take a light-hearted approach to the new equipment to be at your favorite store soon..The folks at Games & Gagets tell me that they have the new XE line on order and are awaiting delivery, I also understand that one of our members has his name on the top of the list for those new machines..rumor has it that the new 3 1/2" drives will only work on the ST models, and that the 65XEM will not be introduced as planned, it has been postponed and may not see the store shelves this spring(they postponed the 1450x1d??) the problem seems to be with the sound chip, they can't find one to meet the designers specs. Also that the new 5 1/4" drives will be true double density.(1050's in the format they should have come out with a year ago) Antic reports thru their Compuserve 60 ANTIC, that Atari will deliver the XE's during April, and that full ST production won't be reached till June.

Our meetings will have a new format. We plan to utilize the rooms available to us at the school in the following manner: After we break up from the formal meeting we will try to form into small groups and have lessons and/or tutorials. We will try to address those areas of Atari computing that some of the new users have problems with, such as understanding the different DOS's available, formatting etc., try to familiarize you with your equipment and we will try to make your attendance to the meetings both informative and hopefully rewarding! Of course our basic lessons will continue, and we plan to go into assembly language, logo, BASIC XL, and possibly ACTION. This will require the assistance/participation of some of our more proficient members, so lets all participate and make this program work.

April 25th thru 28th, will be the dates for the Virginia & Carolinas Bussines Computer Show and we will have a booth during the run of the show, for this we will need volunteers, so far we have about 8 people on our list of volunteers..so don't be shy...

The group will be getting a copy of the new DOS 2.5 with documentation(around May) which we will be able to copy and pass on to all members. If you have any ideas of projects/demos that you would like to see please contact Buck Maudry he's our activities director, he will also welcome any help you can offer. In this issue of our newsletter, we introduce our very own disk drive with it's own DOS...try it out...



S.T.A.T.U.S.

Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily express or reflect the opinions of the Southside Tidewater Atari Technical Users Society. Some of the material contained herein may have been taken from bulletin boards and newsletters of other groups and should not necessarily be construed as fact.

The material herein may be copied freely provided that full credit is given to the original author and the Southside Tidewater Atari Technical Users Society. S.T.A.T.U.S. is not affiliated with Atari Inc.

Please address all newsletter correspondence to:

S.T.A.T.U.S.
Newsletter Exchange
4836 Honeygrove Rd.
Va. Bch., VA 23455
(804)499-6021

MEETINGS: S.T.A.T.U.S. meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays of each month at the Baylake Pines Private School, 2204 Treasure Island Dr., in Virginia Beach. at 6:30 p.m. All interested parties are welcome to attend.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:

Submitted articles are preferred on disk text files, but will be greatly accepted on hard copy (including handwriting) if you do not have a disc drive. If you have a modem, you can upload your articles to the Editor by calling 499-6021. Articles may be submitted anytime, but will probably not make that month's newsletter if submitted less than one week before the regular meeting date.

=====

S.T.A.T.U.S. BBS
804-468-1096

S.T. ... U.S.
Newsletter Exchange
C/O Gene Rodriguez
4836 HONEYGROVE RD.
Virginia Beach, VA 23455

First Class Mail